

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD AT THE
RUTHERFORD COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING IN THE AUDITORIUM ON MAY 23, 2007 AT 4:00
P.M.**

**PRESENT: CHAIRMAN CHIVOUS BRADLEY
VICE CHAIRMAN PAUL MCINTOSH
MARGARET HELTON
CHARLES HILL
BRENT WASHBURN**

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CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bradley called the meeting to order.

BUDGET 2007-2008/SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
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Sheriff Jack Conner described the present situation regarding road officers. Currently there are five officers per shift. He cited numbers about the volume of work the officers are performing, which he said represented a 10% increase in arrests over the previous year and a 22% increase in case load. Comparative numbers from surrounding counties for the number of officers per square mile presented by the Sheriff showed that Rutherford County has more miles to cover with fewer officers. He asked for two additional officers per shift.

The Sheriff reported that over 600 people per day are being processed at the security entrance into the courthouse, and he anticipates that court will go on longer this year. An additional person is needed for courthouse security.

Additional personnel requests of the Sheriff were an additional secretarial person for the Detectives Division. This would involve combining two part-time positions into a fulltime position. Though a narcotics officer position has not been filled, he did not anticipate this being a top priority. If the new Animal Shelter goes on line this year, he will need additional staffing.

The jail is operating with six officers per shift. The Sheriff said his department has received a letter from the state inspector recommending at least one more officer per shift.

Jail Administrator Sherry Simmons described how the population in the jail is managed, including week-enders. In the past six months the average population went from 186 to 200. The number of officers per shift is the same as when the jail was housing an average of 104 inmates. She said additional personnel is needed before someone gets hurt.

BUDGET 2007-2008/MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT
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Maintenance Director Barry Jones said his department does a good job of maintaining county buildings, but does not do a good job maintaining grounds. He asked for a new position that would oversee the planning, landscaping, and upkeep of county properties. The position would require training in horticulture. Funding for transportation and materials would also be required.

Commissioner Washburn pointed out that if the county is interested in making applications for grant for recreational facilities, it will have to be demonstrated that the county is taking care of what is presently in place.

Commissioner McIntosh said the Rutherford 74 Corporate Center grounds will need to be maintained.

BUDGET 2007-2008/INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
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Information Technology Director Gail Strickland told the Board that this department had maintained the computers at the Department of Social services since 1999 when the first computers went on line there. There are now 100 computers in place at this department. She asked that the Board approve the addition of a position that would be a part of her department but would be paid under a contract with DSS who would fund the position in their budget. The cost would be reimbursed 60% by the state.

Ms. Strickland also asked for additional personnel funding to bridge a transition time when she retires later in the year. This would provide an overlap between the time the new director would be hired and her departure.

A request was also presented to fund an imaging position who would take care of individual office needs as it relates to imaging.

BUDGET 2007-2008/SOCIAL SERVICES

DSS Director John Carroll asked that three new positions be approved for DSS. These would be the position described by Information Technology Director Gail Strickland, an income maintenance position, and a processing assistant (clerical) position. He explained how the total county cost for all three positions would only be \$18,000 if all are approved.

BUDGET 2007-2008/LIBRARY

Librarian Martha Schatz asked for one full time and two part time positions. Jeanne Tillman, the children's librarian, described all the things she envisioned being able to do if her position could be increased to fulltime.

BUDGET 2007-2008/RECREATION, HERITAGE, AND CULTURE

Jerry Stensland of Recreation, Heritage and Culture asked for the addition of a line item called miscellaneous expenses. This would include setting up a small grants program to encourage community partners to pursue projects in culture, art and heritage. It would also provide seed money to create a nonprofit foundation which could provide a conduit for the donations businesses give to these activities and make possible grant funding from outside sources.

BUDGET 2007-2008/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Economic Development Commission Director Tom Johnson outlined the accomplishments and initiatives of the past year. For the upcoming year he said the emphasis will be to cultivate existing industry which will be the responsibility the director, to conduct a new effort on commercial development by the marketing director, and to put together special reports and projects which will be the responsibility of the research person. He asked that the current part-time secretarial position be increased to full time so that the research person does not have to fill in when the secretary leaves.

Mr. Johnson also asked for a contingency fund to be used for unexpected expenses, and for funding for a site study for the US 221 property.

BUDGET 2007-2008/FIRE DISTRICTS

Each of the volunteer fire departments appeared in turn to report on their personnel, equipment and buildings. The speakers included James Harris from Cliffside, Greg Ruppe and Dennis Matheny from SDO, Randy Hardin from Shingle Hollow, Don McEntire from Green Hill, Mike Price from Cherry Mountain, Jim Howell from Bills Creek, Diane Clayton from Sandy Mush, and Dean Conner from Union Mills. Each department requested that its tax rate remain unchanged. The overall trend is toward fewer available and willing volunteers so there is a growing need for paid personnel.

Emergency Services Director Roger Hollifield asked that the Board consider creating service districts within the county. Present districts would be abolished. Every person in Rutherford County would be assigned to a fire district. This would allow more citizens to receive an insurance break and would allow the E911 and mapping systems to be upgraded. made a proposal that the new fire service districts be created to replace the existing districts.

The representatives of the fire departments discussed the strains on fire service that they anticipate as a result of increased residential development, with houses being built in difficult terrain and some with only one road to access the property.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Bradley declared the meeting to be adjourned.

8:17 P.M. - Adjourned.

Chairman, Board of Commissioners

Vice Chairman, Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Clerk, Board of Commissioners